

## MTAC Focus Group Session Notes

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### MAIL PREPARATION & ENTRY, OPERATIONS

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#### Session 1: STANDARD MAIL

(Rose Flanagan, MTAC Industry Leader)

##### POST PEAK UPDATE

- Industry asked if delays with service performance counted the last mile mailings or if it was just processing delays. The delays were just processing delays from the Plant and NDC.

##### LABEL LIST ALIGNMENT UPDATE

- Industry asked if Philadelphia was fixed with the STD Mail processing and USPS responded that it has been fixed.
- Industry discussed how Mid-Hudson (example) still had problems that needed to be looked into. USPS is looking at solutions for this problem.

##### NEW FAST APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

- Industry asked if someone is late arriving is the appointment number still on the scanner. USPS said that the appointment stays in the scanner for 24 hours.
- The USPS Sample SV Reports are in the process of being finalized for use
- USPS is doing training to the field locations and are starting to implement the procedures
- Appointment Status Report – USPS discussed on trucks waiting to unload and how long it takes for truck to be unloaded. If USPS can get accurate info they will be able to staff appropriately and to be more efficient in getting the trucks unloaded.
- Industry asked if USPS would be capturing individual FAST appointments and be able to have them be recorded and sent to Industry.
- Industry is asking for 72 hours for appointments to be kept within the system. Industry says that this would reduce the number of no shows and delays. Industry would also like the appointment number to be able to be reassigned to the next day if needed.

- Industry asked if the appointments are moved and if USPS has the reports showing all of the appointments would they not be able to see who would be abusing the system and be able to take action. USPS said that they would be able to see this through the FAST system.
- Industry said that mailers should be able to give their drivers the appointment numbers in FAST in order to provide better content to the USPS
- Discussion on the 24 hour emergency contact numbers in FAST; and how there are still phones that are not getting answered. USPS said that if there is a problem with the phones to call the FAST 24 hour Help Desk and ask to be forward to the Plant Manager directly, which can be done, and that this will help fix those problems.

#### **HIGH SPEED FLATS FEEDER**

- USPS talked how Philadelphia was able to add new zones which was a nice surprise
- Industry asked for a reason for the delay in expanding the HSFF program out to everywhere? Currently, USPS is evaluating the cost effectiveness for the HSFFs as well as if USPS would be better off if that cost were spent in other areas. USPS will have an answer soon. Industry discussed that if we have the HSFF running across the country that Industry would send more flats since it will be a better process.
- Industry asked if it would make sense to move volume (priority flats) for SPSs to HSFF. USPS said that they would look into this.
- Industry asked how and if the multi-scheme pallets on the HSFFs. USPS said that this is what they would be working on next

#### **SAMP Sorter**

- Pure scheme pallets, bundles, and loose pieces are what is sent to the SAMP sorter

#### **FSS PERCENTAGES AND TRENDS**

- Discussion on the breakdown that goes on the FSS and doesn't. And if credit is being given to where it needs to.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- **Need for a Label List - L601 to be updated. The Mid – Hudson was provided as an example.**
- **USPS will evaluate service performance on all Label List changes and provide to Industry.**

- USPS will investigate changing the current 24 hour FAST rule for current appointments to a 72 hour window
- USPS will also investigate giving mailers the ability to re-assign the appointment number to another day when needed.
- USPS will check with USPS Help Desk Leadership on how many open tickets exist in FAST specifically identifying as an example - the 24 hour telephone numbers not answered, or invalid phone numbers at Plants, etc.
- There seems to be confusion concerning how the Carrier Rating System works. Schedulers are rated based on the scheduled appointments, accuracy of content and being on-time for appointments (if there is another item please confirm). Ratings of 90+ allow schedulers to access Tier 1 appointments, 80-89 = Tier 2, continuing to Tier 4. Ratings are by facility however it is unclear whether Tiers are by facility or national. Part of the program contains the USPS requirement that if a carrier is held up at a facility and the appointment is linked to a multi-stop load that facility is supposed to call downstream so the carrier is expedited at subsequent drops. Questions include:
  - Is the Tiering based on a facility rating or the national rating?
  - What does the USPS use to determine if the load is multi-stop? In FAST, that is a check box option, but is that used/accessed? Is some other method used and if so what is it?
  - Does the USPS call downstream currently as the program states?
  - How are late carriers identified and processed at downstream facilities?
  - What happens if the last drop on the load goes beyond a 24-hour window?
- Flat Mail. USPS will review that cost models that are used in making improvements to flats processing efficiencies.
- USPS will investigate potentially running Priority Flats on the FSS instead of the SPSS
- USPS will further breakdown and define for Industry FSS percentages. Unit recorded vs auto case.

**POST PEAK UPDATE**

- Industry asked of the 30,000 holiday temporary employees hired, how many were hired for packaging. USPS answered that the majority would have been hired to work packages.
- Industry thought that PEAK went really well. And also commented on how shippers are offering a lot of data for USPS to use.
- The Shippers also stated that there were a great deal of companies switching to USPS and that USPS should know that the week before the holiday this coming year, they will see another increase. USPS discussed how we tracked Peak Season and that the Sunday deliveries assisted with the Monday deliveries.
- Discussion on Sunday delivery and how USPS worked the packages so that Monday volumes and service were not hit as hard.
- Industry mentioned a lot of Returns were actually done during December and not during Returns “peak” season (January).
- Discussed next year’s holiday season with Christmas landing on a Sunday, and how USPS is doing analysis on how they will handle delivery of packages this coming year.

**NEW FAST APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES**

- USPS is developing reports for industry. Reports that are listed in the PowerPoint are samples of what are being worked on.
- Discussion on how USPS uses hand held scanners and that Industry can see how different plants perform
- NDCs have YMS and that info is captured automatically. The other Plants would need to have the drivers to go in and physically check in with the USPS staff so that they can be scanned in.
- USPS discussed that they want to have correct information so that they can staff correctly. It was pointed out that there were Plants where there were problems getting trucks to the docks. By USPS having the correct information they should be able to fix traffic problems for those sites.
- USPS also talked about how they are working on changing the 24 hour FAST clock and extending it to 72 hours. This would help with the number of no shows and for delays.

- USPS discussed the possibility of how in the future that if USPS caused the delay down the line they would be able to automatically move that truck to the front of the line to get them back on schedule.
- USPS talked on how they would like to get the new SOP out to MTAC and to be able to have a driver made SOP sent out to all the drivers. User Group Three will be working on this task.
- USPS is looking at being able to pull from XML as another way to be able to get FAST information out to the Industry.
- Industry asked about how USPS can minimize times at NDCs. USPS still looking at getting better info, and as drivers become more familiar with the procedure they will have less problems.

#### OPEN DISCUSSION

- Discussion on Bound Printed Matter and how Industry is doing a deep dive with PostalOne and how to fix some of the problems that they have at the moment.
- Discussion on seeing a 5 digit scheme and how there would be a summary that might be part of the electronic fulfillment file and about getting the information onto RIBBS or in a postal bulletins for Industry to see.
- Industry had a question on L606 and

#### ACTION ITEMS

- Investigate the possibility of adding "Day of the week" for the SV sample reports. Additionally, also consider adding the number of trucks per day to the report.
- Review how the 5 Digit changes - to the City/State file in order to make them in a more visible format and let Industry know how they can get to it to see. -- Example: through possibly RIBBS and/or Postal Bulletins
- Investigate conflicts between L606 Label list and the Parcel file. Example: The possible conflict with the Locale Key.

**CSA**

- Discussed the Business Rule Pilot Expansion. The group started with two mailers and now the work group is working with four new mailers.
- Industry likes the concept of it going into pre-sort, but was wondering if different customers might have the problem with some mailings changing each day and floor space might be at a premium. The work group said that they are working with different mailers and letting them set limits that they are able to do without disrupting their work. And with some mailers they are taking in consideration that different companies may have different numbers each day.
- Industry had a question about co-pallets and how this would work with those companies. Discussion on how CSA would not work with in a co-pal environment.
- Work group is looking for different size mailers and mailers that do different types of mailings
- Industry likes that CSA is trying to bring this into the DMM. There are concerns that local USPS offices will want 44 separations whether a company could do this or not. The project goal is to be able to take out this ability from the local offices so companies would not be worried about local pressures.
- Discussion on if the work group is looking at other solutions for customers that this project would not work for.
- Discussion if rules would be tweaked for each company and if that is the case how will USPS get this program into the DMM. The vision is the DMM would drive the rules, but the software would drive the uniqueness of each mailer. National Critical times will not change for anyone. Those times stay the same, though, those times are later than what non CSA mailers have.
- Seamless customers think that the work group may want to look at co-pal in the future for those types of customers.
- The work group is also looking for smaller mailers, or smaller mailings. Some of the discussion is that some of the smaller mailers don't really want to do CSA so that might be a reason that the group is not getting anyone to volunteer. The work group is working with Pritha, and she says that she will make it easier for smaller companies to volunteer.

- Industry brought up that there is single piece separations and that business did not want to do this. The work group is not mandating single pieces at this time.
- USPS pointed out that this is a simulation. And the more help that USPS receives, the better the product will be when USPS rolls it out.
- The network is fluid and this is a big value for mailers.
- The Work Group is pursuing an extension as the current date is December 2015.

#### **5 DIGIT FLAT SCHEME**

- Industry says that it should be simple enough to pull data for USPS. There are tray based and bundle based mail to be run and each would be done differently. Industry said they could give numbers from last year and run it against the scheme to give real customer data. USPS will review at running First Class flats the same as Periodical and Standard schemes. Industry thinks that this makes sense to do since it would help with USPS operational efficiencies.
- Industry thinks that USPS would get more First Class Flats if they would offer the schemes.

#### **L104 Update**

- L104 is still being used
- In the next couple weeks they will have dates for when this Label List will be published.

#### **PARS & UAA Mail**

- USPS discussed how there is not a large amount of mail that goes to UAA
- Industry still thinks there is a problem when the address looks valid, but gets returned as not valid. FCM is working with different groups to help mailers get a better description on why it is returned with a goal to have it not be returned to begin with. Industry believes that there are still too many pieces that are being returned in error.
- Discussed on how a single piece can be counted in UAA multiple times. That is why the number looks larger than it really is.

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

- In the Pulse Meeting it was mentioned that USPS would look at Remittance and Redirect. USPS will reach out to Gary Reblin to see if he can assist

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Does the data that the CSA work group uses identify the First Class Mail Flats by mailer? If so, potentially use to in the model for collecting data for the 5 - Digit First Class scheme.
- Provide Industry a deeper look into reasons for UAA volumes. USPS will possibly consider a First Class Mail webinar to provide answers.
- Revisit Remittance Mail Redirect procedures & policies
- Request to have Delivery personnel included in the Operations Focus Group sessions.
- Request that the Industry Outreach consider a new layout for First Class Group in the Ben Franklin Room
- Provide Industry an overview on how Operations uses Enterprise Analytics' visibility data in order to improve service.

## **Session 4: PERIODICALS**

(Randy Stumbo, MTAC Industry Leader)

### **POST PEAK UPDATE**

- Industry asked about the 30000 temporary employees that were hired for the holiday season and where did they work. USPS explained how most were hired to help with packaging.
- Industry looking for data that shows the increase of trucks coming in during Peak season and asked if there was a shift in behavior between SCF and NDC. Industry would like to see historical numbers over the past couple years.

### **LABEL LIST ALIGNMENT UPDATE**

- The 3 digit labels are done quarterly and the 5 digit labels are done monthly. There was a discussion if there is quality control on the reports. USPS let it be known that they are making a complete new system, and hopefully the new system will run in April along with the old system. If everything is works correctly the new system will be up and running alone. Some problems in the past were due to system drops, but that is taken care of.
- USPS is checking all SCFs are in all systems and making sure there are no discrepancies.

### **NEW FAST APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES**

- USPS pointed out that this has not started yet, but in the process of training.



- All 172 sites have been trained. The non SV sites will still need to be trained as they implement the FAST appointment procedures.
- USPS is in the process of developing reports for industry. Reports that are listed in the PowerPoint are samples of what are being worked on.
- With the Drop Shipment Processing Times report, we can look at individual companies and be able to see valuable information that can help Industry and USPS.
- USPS also talked about how they are working on changing the 24 hour FAST appointment system to 72 hours. This would help with the number of no shows and delays.
- USPS discussed the possibility of how in the future that if USPS causes the delay that down the line they would be able to potentially automatically move the delayed truck to the front of the line to get them back on schedule. And systematically, if the delay is caused by USPS, when the delayed truck did arrive that mail would make the Critical Entry Time.
- Industry asked about being able to filter by the three tours for SV reporting. USPS will look into that.
- USPS has already considered that they would not be penalized for trucks that arrive early for their appointment, and then USPS started the unloading at the original appointment time.
- Discussed that no matter what time they arrive and how fast they get to the dock that everyone will have to follow all the same procedures each time.
- USPS talked on how they would like to get the new SOP out to MTAC and to be able to have a driver made SOP sent out to all the drivers. User Group Three will be working on this task.
- The ultimate goal would be that the USPS would use FAST to be able to staff employees for the mail coming to the dock. This will help increase efficiency.

#### **HIGH SPEED FLAT FEEDER**

- USPS discussed the HSFF and the various efficiencies gained when using the HSFF
- Industry is saying that they don't want to jump into this machine if the pricing is not helping them. Cost needs to be looked at and see if the pricing is going to come down if the HSFF is implemented across the country. The question is if the number for Flats goes down would that raises the cost per piece? USPS needs to come back to explain where the savings will be seen with this new machine.

- Industry requested validity on the various costs for the HSFF USPS says that if the cost does go down that they will move forward, if the cost goes up that they will not move ahead.

#### **SAMP SORTER**

- In two to three months USPS hopes to test out in the field.
- USPS discussed on how assumptions have not been made. In the near future there will be some testing in the Great Lakes Area with the work group. This will help USPS to move forward with actual data.

#### **Bundle Breakage**

- Industry would like to receive the Top 10 and Bottom 10 for Bundle Breakage. USPS is going to do a deeper dive and then will see about showing this information.
- The mail owners would like to receive their info on bundles. USPS will look into it.
- Industry is asking what kind of reporting is done internally, and wants to know why they can't see the info now. USPS discussed how this is brand new and they are still looking at what this means and what is the best way to provide it.
- Industry points out that when they go to seamless that this will count against the mailers scorecard so they want to make sure they have the numbers to see what they can do to fix it.

#### **Newspaper Update**

- Newspapers will be having training in March at Headquarters, USPS and they are asking for all newspapers and printers that mail newspapers to see about attending.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- **Determine for Industry if there is a shift in mailer behavior regarding NDC drops vs SCF drops; particularly during Peak Season versus Non-Peak Season. Is there any type of a trend to this possible shift?**
- **What is the validation process for distribution of Label List changes**
- **For the new SV reports , evaluate the ability to filter by "tour" for the SV reporting**
- **Share USPS machine performance regarding Bundle Breakage with Industry and Mail Owner**